

## THE FINANCIAL SITUATION.

The advancing prices in last week's stock market were, as is usually the case, accompanied by greater activity in the dealings. Several explanations might be proffered of the tendencies displayed. Chief among them, there must be placed the glowing and magnificent outlook for the country's cereal crops. Then again, there has been a decided diminution in the uneasiness recently felt with respect to the monetary outlook for the remainder of the summer and the autumn. There has been no pronounced improvement in the anthracite coal strike situation and none but negative evidences that the troubles in that quarter are anywhere near conclusion. The additional labor troubles threatening on the elevated railway lines in this borough, while of serious local importance and while also possessing further significance, have been treated with indifference and produced scant effect upon even the stock of the Manhattan Railway Company itself. Additional incentives to speculative activity have been furnished by the concluding negotiations in the Louisville and Nashville settlement, out of which and also in connection with other matters, there have grown up exaggerated ideas as to immediate developments in the Southern railway field. In any consideration of the stock market dealings of the past week, particularly in their relation to the future, it should be added that the dealings have reflected a resumption of the manipulation of the same bold character which, for one reason or another, was interrupted several weeks ago. Inasmuch as the chief paragraphs in this manipulation must be left with no little acumen, it is to be inferred that they have become reassured sufficiently respecting the monetary and agricultural situations, and perhaps in other regards also, as to encourage them to resume their operations where they left them off the middle of last month.

In regard to the railway situation in the Southern States, it would appear that a general non-action as to the true state of affairs is prevalent. The fact is, that the stability which has existed there for several years now has unquestionably been disturbed by two more or less recent occurrences. The first of these was the invasion of the Southern territory by the St. Louis and San Francisco company by reason of its acquisition of the Kansas City, Tulsa, and Birmingham line. The next and more serious event was the successful raid of the Western contingent in Louisville and Nashville. The latter events, however, were of far-reaching and direful consequences, which were happily promptly averted, but the ultimate consequences of the Louisville and Nashville raid are not as yet even in view. For one thing, the Louisville and Nashville incident, coupled with the simultaneous capture by Mr. Gates and his associates of the Chicago, Indianapolis and Louisville Railway, forced the Southern Railway Company to abandon its traditional policy of remaining south of the Ohio River. It can be asserted as a fact that the joint control of the Chicago, Indianapolis and Louisville, assumed by the Louisville and Nashville and Southern Railway companies, was a policy of expediency and not of election. However, that step has been taken, and in consequence, a more threatening condition of things than Wall Street in general has had any conception of has been disposed of. An unfortunate side of the business is that the success of the engineers of this enterprise will doubtless act as an incentive to activity in a like direction on the part of any group of speculators possessing the foresight and resources to acquire control of some of the other smaller independent lines now hidden away in the country's railway map.

With the course of the week, heavy speculation has been conducted in the stocks of the Louisville and Nashville, Illinois Central, Southern Railway, and, in the market for curb securities, the Seaboard Air Line issues have advanced rapidly also. Reasoning therefrom, and furthermore from the pending Louisville and Nashville settlement, Wall Street has arrived at the conclusion that there will forthwith be a very radical readjustment of the railway map in the Southeastern States. As stated above, the ideas in this respect are not apt to be immediately realized, if at all. In all likelihood, it was the purchase by the St. Louis and San Francisco of the Chicago and Eastern Illinois property at prices which must have been highly gratifying to the vendors that served to inflame fresh the Wall Street imagination in this general respect. The St. Louis and San Francisco property is largely controlled by a number of wealthy St. Louis capitalists, together with some Eastern associates. They apparently entertain quite ambitious designs for the development of their original property, which from having been a line extending from St. Louis rather indefinitely throughout the Southwest, now possesses a Chicago connection and another line extending southeast to Birmingham, Ala. It is believed that the "Frisco" management is gradually feeling its way toward the Atlantic seaboard, and many of the week's more positive rumors have grown out of this idea.

There is no question but that there is food for serious reflection in such recent events as the expansion of a number of heretofore small and more or less local railway lines, and in such matters as the Louisville and Nashville foray and the complete change in the control of the Rock Island system. The meaning of such developments is that the stability of railway operation, and the concentration of control, which have been the main lines of policy followed during the past ten years, are being seriously threatened. The situation which it has been the endeavor of the most far-sighted capitalists to create was at the best a most delicately balanced one. There is already apparent, and very clearly so, the effect for example of the aggressive policy of the Gould system in its efforts to reach an Atlantic terminal. It is not difficult to conjecture what the railway situation might have become had the Louisville and Nashville and Chicago, Indianapolis and Louisville properties been permitted to remain in the control of the men who conducted the successful raid on the former. As for the status of the Louisville and Nashville property, as it will remain after the present settlement, it can be asserted with authority that the ultimate disposition of the property has not even as yet been decided upon. There is, however, going to be no grand amalgamation of all the railways in the Southern States to include everything from the Illinois Central to the Atlantic coast line, although the Wall Street imagination is quite prepared to admit of such a probability as that. The Illinois Central management have the ability and the resources to take care of their property, and it is only the earnest endeavor of the interests controlling the other long-existing lines in the South to conserve and develop their properties. Should they find their position menaced through the overweening ambition of other capitalists, they too are fully prepared to defend themselves and to adopt any retaliatory measures that may become necessary. It must be admitted, however, that the fact that the prolonged

peace which has prevailed in the railway situation has been so often of late seriously menaced is a by no means reassuring sign of the times.

It now seems possible to dismiss from consideration any further anxiety regarding the year's cereal crops. The certainty is that the country will enjoy a bountiful harvest, and the prospects are fair for a bumper yield of all the cereal crops. It is too far along in the season now for any serious impairment to occur through any of the ordinary meteorological or other vicissitudes. As already noted, the prospect in regard to this has been among the main factors in the bettering tendencies of the market during the past week, and rightfully so. The year's agricultural situation would certainly seem to insure that rapid and general distribution of commodities which finds reflection in the current returns of railway traffic. The completed annual statements of the great railway companies which will shortly be submitted to their shareholders will undoubtedly show new high records of prosperity established, and the new fiscal year starts out with every promise that the railways will give even a better account of themselves during the ensuing twelve months. The less pessimistic views now prevailing with regard to the monetary situation during the remainder of the year have likewise, been among the sustaining influences of the week, although the reasons for the changed temper in this regard are not altogether clear. The Wall Street community, however, have undoubtedly taken the precaution of fortifying their position through the taking out of time loans covering the period of probable stress in the money market; and that being the case, while the autumn months will, in all probability, witness active monetary conditions and perhaps occasional flurries, the latter do not imply any serious derangement of the stock market structure.

W. N. S.

## FINANCIAL AND COMMERCIAL.

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Sales. Name Open High Low Clos.

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5 Atch & St. 95 95 94 93

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